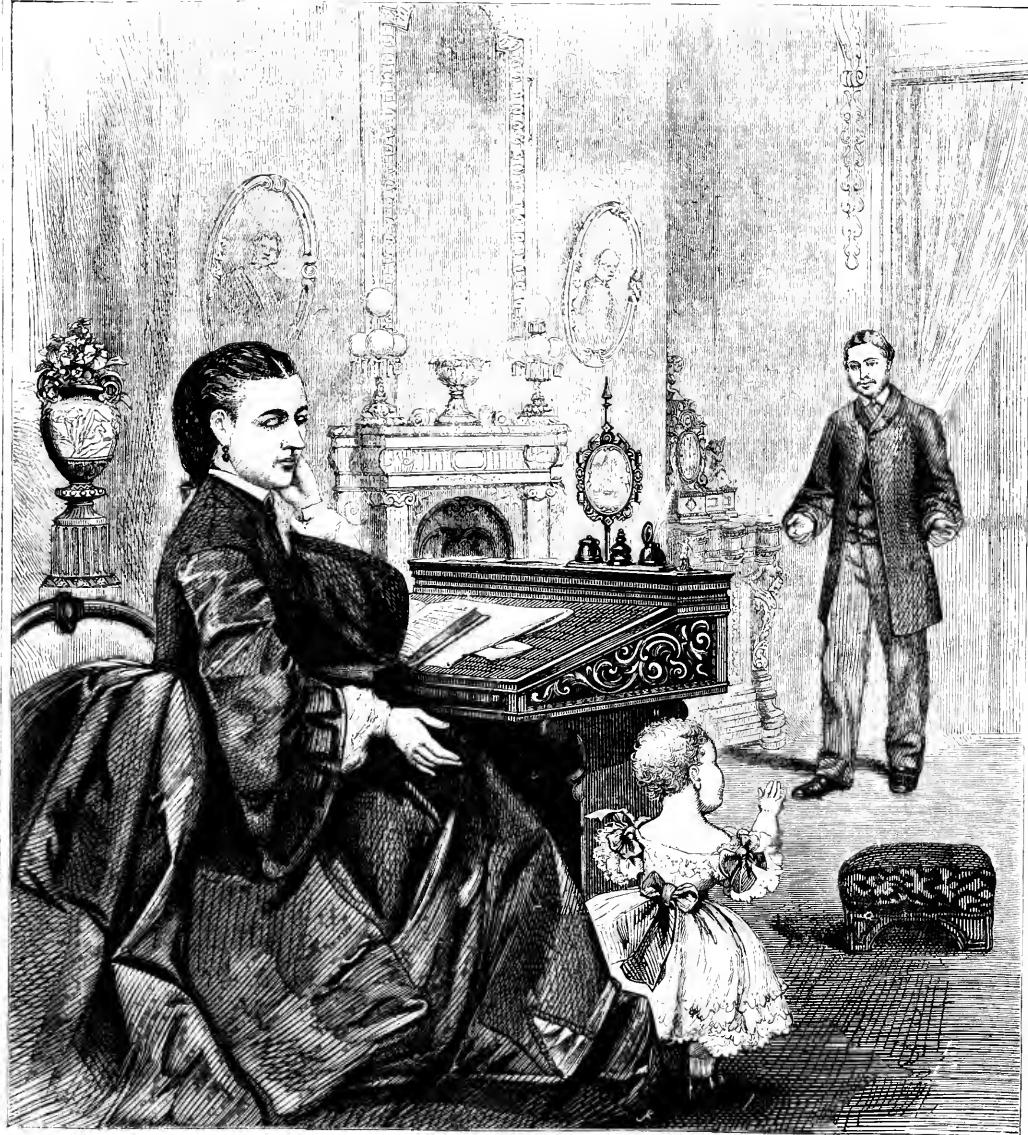


# THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN

## OUT AND AT HOME.

"A Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her."—Prov. xxxi.



"YES, DEAR! PAPA IS COMING."

THE SCHOOL-FELLOWS;  
OR,  
WHICH IS BEST?  
BY THE AUTHOR OF "A WOMAN'S PREACHINGS FOR  
WOMAN'S PRACTICE."

"For man, of course, Martha, to go to Dunthorne Fair," asked Jessy Rydale, of one of her young companions, as the scholars poured forth from the school where they intended, one founded by Lady Marriton, who resided at Dunthorne Hall, in Suffolk. Martha did not immediately reply to this query, and Jessy, talking half-jokingly on—"I have saved over so much money, and I mean to have such fun."

Martha looked at her. "Why, Jessy, this morning we were asked to give each a halfpenny to the Missionary box, and you told governess you had no money."

Jessy coloured. "Oh, I meant none to spare."

"But, Jessy, that was untrue; you could have spared a halfpenny for the box."

"Untutored! How you do preach—there's no harm in saying things like that; besides, what good can our halfpennies do, I should like to know?"

"Jessy! Only yesterday we read about the widow's mite, and that as she had given as much as she could, it was accounted the same as the rich man's gift. Our halfpennies, and the mites of others' schools, make a good sum; I have heard Mrs. Vincent say, in the course of a year."

"Well, I've nothing to spare for such things; I'm sure it's hard enough to save a little for spending, without giving one's money away—you may do it if you like—you know," sneering, "you're one of Mrs. Vincent's patron girls; think goodness, I don't set up for such things; and I think, Martha, you're a Pharisee, and nothing more,—then, you see I can recollect Scripture lessons as well as you."

Martha's eyes filled with tears; but she was a weak little girl, and never took offence if she could help it. She had been taught that she must strive to follow the example of One who especially taught his disciples to avoid wrath and strife; and though she sometimes had a hard struggle to help resenting affronts, she did try, and was rewarded in the peace of mind and happiness she found to ensue from such a practice.

"I hope I am not proud, like a Pharisee," she said gently; "but, Jessy, do you think it right to go to the fair?"

Jessy opened her large black eyes in amazement. "Why, whatever says it is wrong; don't all the girls in Dunthorne go?"

"No, not all. Mary Dawson, Jane Wood, Caroline Hill, don't mean to go—and—and—I am not going?"

"Not going! Well that's troll; you won't last year." "Yes, but I was so fatigued and ill after going, that, even if mother and father saw no harm in it, I should never care to go again; but when I believe it is not right, I should certainly not enjoy myself."

"Well, you must have a fine taste! Why, there are the shows to begin with, and the swings, and roundabouts, and a dancing booth, beside gingerbread nests,—and such games."

"Mother says that for girls who wish to be thought respectable, such things are bad; but she says, too, that though amusements are not forbidden, there are some which tend to make young people bold and hardened, and often tempt them to begin doing wrong which finishes in some dreadful way."

"Oh, that is very fine," said Jessy; "but I mean to go for all that; and when you see my feelings, I know very well you'll wish you had done like me."

"There is another thing," Martha said, hesitatingly; "you know, Jessy—you as well as I—that we hope, when we are old enough, to get places at the Hall. Now Lady Marriton declares she will take no girl out of the school, either for her own service or to recommend them, that goes to either Dunthorne fair or the races."

"Oh! there we are, are we; then, it is not because it is sinful, Mrs. Prudence, but because you are afraid of not getting a good place? Well, I don't care, I can get a place anywhere; and as for the Hall, I don't want to be there, I am sure. One might as well be in prison, if all Mabel Price says is true."

"Fie, Jessy, I don't like to hear you talk so. I would rather do right for right's sake, and not for the worldly advantages I may reap; but you seemed bent on going to the fair, that I tried any means to persuade you not to go."

"Thank you, Miss Martha," said the pert Jessy, "mind your own business, and I'll mind mine, and at the end of a few years I dare say I shall be as well off as you—perhaps rather better."

THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.

"I am sure I hope you may," was Martha's mild answer, as she turned into her mother's cottage.

And Jessy kept her word, and went to the fair in company with a parcel of girls, as wild and ill disciplined as herself. They ate sweetmeats, visited the booths, and in riot, that was anything but pleasure, spent alike their precious time, their money, and even health.

Every-day employments seem tame after dissipation, and a week's neglect of school and other duties, was one of the consequences of Dunthorne Fair.

On the same day, Martha had her holiday; but it was not however spent so unwisely. She went to a distant farm-house, where she enjoyed the day in simple rural pleasures; and on the morrow, cheerful and refreshed, she commenced anew her duties.

When the two girls came to be about fifteen and sixteen years of age, their parents wished them to go to service. As Lady Marriton had promised to take them, application was made to that effect; Martha being intended for maid to the house-keeper, and Jessy, whose mother had cows and poultry, as under-dame maid. Lady Marriton remembered her promise, and agreed to receive them into her household, provided their characters bore strict inspection, especially with reference to the fair and races.

Martha, having nothing to fear, heard this with cheerfulness, but Jessy turned red with vexation, though she tossed her head, and said, pertly, she supposed there were quite as many good places as Lady Marriton's to be had.

The mistress of the school, on being interrogated, could not conceal the truth that she knew Jessy to be a frequenter of all places of public amusement, especially of Dunthorne Fair; this information was quite enough, and the lady declined taking Jessy—accepting Martha, and selecting another girl in the place of the former, who now had to seek another place, her mother being too poor to help her in illness.

It is not intended to represent Martha as faultless; no human being is so, for we are all full of errors and imperfections, even where no great vices exist; but if we humbly try to overcome those faults, placing our trust in One who died to assure us of salvation, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our faults, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Martha was given to indulgence, and had a very bad habit of doing her work imperfectly, which, in a girl destined to service is a very grave fault. The housekeeper at Lady Marriton's was, however, a strict disciplinarian, and as Martha knew her own failings, and strove earnestly to rectify them, she soon began to give satisfaction to her employers, while her sterling good qualities of gentleness, meekness, truth, and honesty, her humble trust and faith in her God and Savior, made her an example even to those far above her in worldly station. She had another great merit—she was content to fill the station in which her Creator had placed her, and was anxious only to study the duties belonging to her sphere of life, and to do them. This is the true end of all education. Every one cannot aspire to worldly distinction, and it would produce great confusion if they did; but all can learn their duty and perform it—thus adorning the station they fill; and more cannot be done by the highest and noblest in the land. The ignorance of our present time, consists in not understanding the happiness of contentment, not studying those things which belong to a bumble, but importantly useful life, neglecting our duties, both practical, religious and moral, and in hoping for, and aspiring to, social elevation, which we are unfit for by nature and education to fill.

Jessy, who had been idle in her classes, who read badly, and wrote worse, had the idea constantly in her mind, that she should meet with what she called some great good fortune, and become a lady. Her own vanity, and the injudicious flattery of thoughtless people, led her to this silly conclusion.

Martha, who was pleased in her person, never thought for a moment of her own attractions; but Jessy, who was certainly very good-looking, never lost an opportunity to display her good looks, exposing herself to the ridicule of the sensible, and the jeers of those who were as light principled as herself. She got a place in the village, but soon left it, and went to London, where she obtained a nurse-girl's situation, and there for the present we must leave her.

Martha remained at Lady Marriton's for some years, during which time she received instruction from the lady's maid in millinery and dress-making, for which she displayed great talent, and which, though she did not present, no further use for it, was serviceable in enabling her to make her own clothes, and thus put by what it had hitherto cost her to have them made. At this period her mother died, and being an only

child, her father wished her to come home and keep his house for him. He was only an agricultural labourer, but he was sober and steady, and their cottage was an abode of rustic comfort. As Martha found she had abundance of leisure, she resolved to take in dress-making work, and soon got so much, that it increased materially the comforts of her only surviving parent, and gave her confidence in the future. The habits of order and neatness she had been disciplined in at service, made her modest little cottage superior to those of the neighbours; and where the go hand in hand with religion, there indeed is perfect peace. Simple and innocent recreations till formed her pastime. Boisterous mirth and riotous pleasures she shunned as carefully as when she was a pupil of the village school. An evening walk in summer, a good and amusing book read out to her father by the winter fireside, the general occupations for her leisure moments, as agreeable as were instructive.

What peace and real happiness result from well-spent lives, what misery and guilt spring from the thirst for unlawful pleasure, the disregard of sacred duties and obligations! The differences between two such lives will presently be shewn.

In happiness and fear of God, Martha's aged father lived his days out, and at length peacefully slept in the Lord, blessing with his last breath his dutiful and good daughter. Dear young friends, no wealth, no worldly honours, can bestow the deep, heartfelt comfort and joy which those know who have earned and inherited a parent's blessing. Nothing is like it; and Martha felt soothed by it, even while she grieved for her loss. She had now less to attend to, and, with the aid of a young apprentice, she gathered a thriving business, working even occasionally for Lady Marriton, her former mistress, and the lady's daughters. Ma y a young man in the village sigh for obtain favour in the eyes of the young village dressmaker, but she seemed in no hurry to change a condition, which, if hard working, was still a happy one.

One bleak and bitter evening in February, Martha, having worked till it was no longer light, despatched her little apprentice on an errand. The girl came in presently, breathless: "There is a poor woman, mistress," she cried, "dying. I believe, of cold and hunger in the lane yonder; not an old woman—quite young, like you."

"Poor creature," Martha replied; "fetch me some elder wine, Sisun, out of the cupboard, and warm it in the scuttlepan, and give me my shawl—I will go and see what is the matter; and, listen—if I should call for you, come to me with the warm wine."

She walked rapidly to the place, where, lying within the shadow of a doorway, the wan form of a woman was visible. Some of the village children stood gazing on this poor sufferer, two or three of them grinning at their crusts, but none offering aid or sympathy of any kind. Some passengers had stopped and looked, and crossed over to the other side. It remained for Martha to be the good Samaritan, who should rescue this poor creature from the cold and the hunger to which she was a victim. She gently lifted the poor woman's head, and poured a little milk down her throat; presently she began to revive, but was much too weak to be able to rise and walk even so far as Martha's house. She murmured some faint words of blessing to her preserver, who called now to the apprentice to bring the wine; and at the warmth of the spiced drink soon put a little strength into the fibs of the miserable creature.

Thus she was led to the house of her preserver, who prepared her own bed for the sufferer, without even an enquiry as to her character and habits. Martha had always before her eyes the example of One who pitied sinners, even while He rebuked sin; besides, she justly considered that she had no right to imagine that, because poor and destitute, this poor woman was therefore sinful. She determined first to administer to her pressing bodily necessities, and then, if needful, to examine into her spiritual welfare. When a good fire had been kindled, and a stronger light came on the features of the sick person, Martha started with horror and dismay—the name of her former playmate escaped her—"Jessy!" she cried,—"No, it is not possible—I must be mistaken." The sound of her own name roused the miserable creature, but she had previously recognised Martha, though she trusted that she herself might not be known. Shame in her was indeed stronger than repenace; and even while receiving benefits from one whom she had formerly despised, she could not avoid a feeling of envy at the difference in their fates; a difference it is remembered, brought about solely by self-guile and self-conduct. There is, indeed, an especial Providence exercised by the good God over

all his creatures, but in placing before us evil and good, we have still the power of choosing which we will be. Rightly has it been said, that conduct is fate. Misfortunes and sorrow may pursue the good, but they are never de-erred; and though hidden by dark clouds for a time, the mists will presently disperse, and the sun of righteousness stream over the sufferer, shielding its radiance over all things, and turning the darkness into golden light.

Jessy, then, had made her own fete. Giddy and impudent, she had procured a place in London, and one where unfortunately the mis-trusts exercised in supervision over her servants. All her wages were spent in gaudy dress; all her aims were directed to attract attention, and in this she succeeded to well. Attractive in person, she soon fell a victim to arts superior to her own. She had many acquaintances of her own sex, even more worthless, and certainly more depraved, than herself. To deceive her mistress—to steal out at night when supposed to be in bed, and then to partake of giddy and unlawful pleasures, was a principal part of this misguided girl's career. She was found out at last, and instantly dismissed from her service—dismissed penniless, forfeiting at once both home and character.

Among the disorderly and improper acquaintances she had made in London, there was a private soldier who, even in barracks, had obtained an evil reputation. This man, by name Joseph Ellison, had offered himself as a suitor to Jessy, who had at first turned away from his advances, but who gradually ensnared by the evil company with whom she mixed, was now glad to obtain the name of wife even from such a man. They were married, and the consequences of such an union soon showed themselves. Jessy was made a drudge, and, as she resisted, and, moreover, was continually gadding about in search of idle pleasures, her husband soon ill-treated and even beat her. Violent and disorderly, Jessy made no attempt to reclaim either herself or him. She became a slattern, and even indulged in ardent liquors whenever she could get them. A soldier's wife has need of becoming industrious and clever, if she would live comfortably. At first, Jessy took in washing, but she lost all her customers as fast as she gained them, so great was her carelessness—so unprudent her habits. At length Joseph Ellison's regiment was ordered to India; only a certain number of the men's wives were selected to go, but she was rejected. Her disorderly conduct, her want of cleanliness, and her pert tongue, prejudiced every officer against her. She was left behind, and Private Ellison testified no great grief at his loss. Worse, she was left destitute, as many of the poor wives of soldiers, most of them, however, are honest, industrious women—but Jessy, good looking, idle, seductive, her fate may soon be read. After her husband's departure she sank gradually in vice and misery, too shocking to portray in these pages. At last came sickness, which made her pass from her mad career; and then, when disengaged from the hospital which had formed her sole shelter, a weary longing came over her for her native village, where she fancied those who knew her formerly might shelter her and give her employment. To beg her way to Dunthorpe was now her sole resource, for she had not a penny, and scarcely clothes fitted to shelter her from the influence of the weather. She succeeded in reaching her native place, but, as she believed, only to die there. From this fact her early companion, Martha, relieved her. The kind girl, still more deeply interested when she found that the traveller was her schoolmate, attended her, watched her day and night, and wept and prayed over her. Even the hard and callous heart of Jessy softened under the love and benevolence of Martha; the latter, who could not fail to understand, from Jessy's narratives, how sad had been her career, strove earnestly to impress the wretched young woman with the repentance which alone could bring her to a new life, to the feet of the Saviour whom she scorned and ignored. Although at first she turned away from all serious conversation with something like disgust, yet Martha, at last, hoped that the traces of her past levity had disappeared not easily to return. As for employment, that question was easily disposed of—for as Martha's business daily increased, she could give Jessy quite sufficient work with the needle, to keep her handily yet comfortably—work too, which Jessy, who had always been handy with her needle, could do quite well, and for which at first she professed to be grateful. But Martha had another trial to undergo. The village gossips shook their heads when they found Jessy domesticated under Martha's roof, and predicted that no good would come of it. They averred that her neglect and

silence had broken her mother's heart. And one or two stragglers from Lombia had told how they had met Jessy, and in what company. Some doubted her marriage, but she soon set all those doubts at rest by shewing her certificate; she felt herself triumphant there, but wise folk shook their heads again, as they said, a woman might disgrace her husband as well as her parents. Nothing but Martha's own exemplary character could have saved even herself, from censure, but the purity of her motives never once was called in question, nor the earnestness of her efforts to win Jessy back into the straight and open path.

It is to be feared that envy had some share in Jessy's apparent reformation. She held the greatest respect and affection entertained by nearly every one for Martha, and she aspired to be treated in the same way; she wore now a studied shyness of manner, which imposed on the shallow observer, but which resembled the serene cheerfulness of Martha as little as night does the bright and open morning. Her still handsome person attracted towards her many of the young men in the village, and many a time she bewailed her ill fate in being married, so that her luck in life was marred.

The idle and the vicious in the village were not backward in renewing their acquaintance with Jessy,—they endeavoured to visit her; but Martha, who possessed firmness and good sense, as well as piety and humanity, interfered.

"I cannot have these people here," she said to Jessy; "my character is all I have in the world, and to be known as the acquaintance of such persons would be ruin."

And Jessy wept, and said how hard it was to depend on charity, and be a slave; but when Martha quietly told her she was free to choose for herself, she threw her arms about her, and said she could never bear to leave so good a friend.

She saw these acquaintances afterwards only by stealth, but she did see them, proving thereby how little her heart was converted, though her interest made her conform to ways and habits which, in her heart, she disdained and sneered at.

Hypocrisy is a fearful vice. Open crime is more easily subtilized and arrived at, but that sin is deep in the heart—and never, never, is rooted out.

Dunthorpe still had its fairs and races, and with returning health and spirits, Jessy began to feel her old cravings after what she called pleasure.

She broached the subject openly to Martha one day.

"I should like," she said, "to peep at the fair."

Martha looked up in mild astonishment.

"I should have thought," Jessy, she replied, "that you had seen the evil of those places long since, too much, to wish to frequent them again."

"Oh, you mean because I made a bad marriage, and—"

"I mean, my dear Jessy, because you were led terribly astray, even from your girlhood, by a love of such places; remember you lost Lady Marriton's place through that—but you stayed in Dunthorpe, how different might have been your lot!"

But Jessy said that all that happened had been her "fate."

Martha gently denied this, and said that God placed our fate in a great measure in our own hands, and that we must answer to Him for the use we made of the opportunities given us. "You have a home, dear Jessy," she said, "one, bestow'd again, to keep in the right way, if you do not deserve it; therefore, pray avoid all opportunities of temptation, seek them not, and all will be well; remember, that of ourselves we have no strength, and that we are not, the best of us, strong to resist evil, especially when it comes in forms most pleasing to us."

Jessy made no reply; but her poor heart she called Martha a preacher, and determined, if possible, to satisfy her secret longing to taste once more of worldly amusement. She had been sobered by her misfortunes, but not reformed. The heart was still what it had ever been, in her gayest, giddy days.

On the morning of the fair-day, she pleaded violent headache, as an excuse for not rising at her usual hour. She knew that Martha and the apprentice were both obliged to go to Marriton Hall to take an order, and also to assist in making up some evening dresses; she, therefore, laid her plans accordingly. Martha having visited her, and brought some tea, expressed regret at being forced to be absent, and placed within Jessy's reach everything she supposed her to want. Many a heart would have been touched with such proofs of love and confidence, but Jessy's unhappy, was not that heart.

Her deceptive nature rejoiced at the success of her stratagem, and no sooner had Martha and her little apprentice departed, than Jessy jumped nimbly out of bed, washed and dressed herself in the good Sunday clothes with which her benefactress had supplied her, and then she left the cottage, without even the precaution of locking it up. "I shall be back," she said to herself, "before Martha comes home; I know she will stay at the Hall till evening." She had a little money—savings which Martha had implored her to make; and now, once more, behold her, forgetful of all she had suffered through her former sins, intent only on visiting a scene of boisterous mirth, and rude licence. It was not long before she espied several of her evil companions. A party was made to visit some of the booths, and quickly she was immersed in the vortex of vain and profitless pleasures. It grew dusk before she gave a thought to home, or the too confounding Martha; and when she did, and mentioned her wish to return, she was taunted with being the slave of a preaching Methodist. Flushed with the strong ale with which they had regaled themselves, she resented this, and a quarrel presently ensued between herself and the girl who thus twitted her. Words came first—blows next—and soon the whole party were taken into custody, for obstructing the fair, and for riotous behaviour. This sobered Jessy. In a moment all her hopes of fair character were gone for ever; a few hours with bad company had once more thrown her out of the pale of virtue and solicitude. She was locked up the whole night, and in the morning taken before a magistrate; she was fined to an extent which took the whole of many weeks' savings. She was also wholly disgraced; and, to crown all, there stood Martha, with sorrowful looks, and downcast eyes, not wishing to upbraid, but evidently not knowing what to say or do. It was now a duty to herself, and one which her own character demanded, to deny any further abode under her roof to the misguided creature, who, with her soiled and torn attire, her dishevelled hair and stained face, stood there an example to be shunned and avoided.

"Jessy," Martha began, "I am very sorry—"

"There, you need say no more. I do not want to be preached to; I am tired of it already."

"But what will you do—where will you go? Oh! Jessy, you would give me one trial more, if you could but be trusted. We should forgive even unto seventy times seven—"

"Don't distress yourself, I shall find a home, I dare say, I can work as I have done; I am strong—"

"—I stopped, shame came just then, and whispered who had given her strength—work—all. She burst into tears.

"Don't, Jessy," she said, taking her hand, "be comforted. I can still give you work out—you can take a cheap room—you see—I should like every friend I have if I took you in again, and character is my bread. Come, be comforted, all is not yet lost."

But the wretched girl motioned her away—she closed her ears to the words of peace, of love, of charity and hope; and when Martha persisted in her well-meant efforts, she shivered upon her a volley of abuse, in words that made the gentle and Christian young woman shrink, in terror and awe, from her violence and depravity. She could do no more. She could but pray that the stony heart might be turned—the depraved will made to subside in time.

Jessy was left to herself. It should here be stated, that her mother had died during those evil days passed by the daughter in London—died in poverty and grief. Did no thought of that poor mother arise to turn the wayward creature to remorse? None. How she got her living henceforth was a mystery—sometimes in the fields—sometimes in house-hold labour—but Jessy was always to be found in those places where dissipation was going on; and might be met, in the bold, hardened, flaunting women, at baronet feasts and fairs,—all trace of her former beauty gone—to be seen no more.

Two years passed. Martha had become the wife of a thriving young farmer, and was reaping, in domestic happiness and love, the fruits of her former good conduct; when one day a woman came in haste to Mrs. Thomas at the farm, to say, a woman, who was dying in Dunthorpe workhouse, begged to speak with her.

"Who is the woman?" said Martha. "Do I know her? Not that it matters much; if I can do the poor soul any good I will go with pleasure, but my husband does not like me to be out of the way, and—" "I don't know who she is," answered the messenger,

"but she says she cannot die till she sees Martha Thomas, and we reckon, mistress, that is you."

"Well, I will return with you," said Martha, putting on her neat bonnet and cloak, and following the woman, who led the way to Dunthorne workhouse, which was about two miles distant from Farmer Thomas's.

On a bed, in the sick ward of this establishment, lay the wreck of what had once been Jessy Rydale. Her arms were wildly tossed about in an agony, that evidently was but the prelude of death. Martha was stricken to the heart—their innocent childhood, their youth, and the sad difference between their maturity, flashed on her as she beheld so terrible a sight. She breathed a silent prayer that she might be of use in this crisis.

"Dear Jessy," she said, "I grieve to see you so ill. You have seen the clergyman?"

"No—no—no," said the sufferer, vehemently. "I want no one but you, Martha—what must I do to be saved? The time is short. I cannot pray—pray for me. Oh! God, have mercy!"

Martha bent her head down to the poor creature's ear. This was the end of selfish pleasure then. "If you believe in a Saviour, His," she said, "it is all powerful to save you, even now—so you but repent. It is a bad thing, Jessy, to leave all to the last, but His mercy has no limits. He can stretch forth His hand even now, and save you from the guilt which yawns. Dear sister, are you sincerely repentant?"

"Yes—yes—oh! that I had my time to come again—oh! that I had lived with you, lived like you."

She went then, and Martha hailed those tears as a promise of pardon and redemption.

"I am an erring mortal, Jessy, like yourself. Yet I feel persuaded God has sent me as an instrument to snatch you from that eternal death suffered by the impotent and hardened."

A shadow passed over the face of the dying woman.

"Who says," she asked huskily, "who says I am hardened?"

"Nay, I trust not. Oh! Jessy, the moments are fleeting. Think of One who suffered even death that His unthankful children might live."

"But—I—and the wretched woman gasped the words in horror—"I have never thought of Him, never cared for His ways. I have hardened my heart—oh! Martha, pray for me. I cannot pray for myself. I have never prayed since we went to the village school. Do you know how I got my death-blow? The man I married led me into these parts a little while ago. He had deserted from his regiment—and—and I was maddened, stung by his taunts—I went and gave information. He rushed at me when he was taken, and gave me a blow that caused the illness which laid me here. He called me Judas. Judas—"

Her sobs began to waver now, and scarce were the ravings which Martha Thomas was condemned to hear. Jessy could no longer comprehend the voice of love which called on her to trust in the unfailing Righteousness. She had left all till the eleventh hour, and time was passing. Yet even now mercy was worshipped her. Delay was granted. She slept at last—slept, deep and long, awaking from her slumbers calm, composed, but sinking fast. Her frame of mind was altered even; she spoke resignedly of her coming dissolution, and desired those around would pray with her—holding Martha's hand fast in hers, while she did so. Martha had only left the dying woman for a time, and had returned again to witness the closing scene.

Penitent at last, trusting that her sins would be washed clean through the blood of her Saviour, Jessy died, a warning and an example to those who, like her, love this world better than the immortal hopes given us by One who never fails to those who love Him, nor even to those who turn from their evil ways, and seek at last His rest.

Still, dear young friends, be warned, and think of these things in due time. Leave not the concerns of your immortal welfare to the latest hour and minute of your life. You know in temporal affairs the evils of procrastination; but, then, can you put off those things which concern eternity itself? Pleasure hardens the heart, and converts it into stone, as

regards God and heavenly things; yet its fruits are even as the dust to which the apples of the Dead Sea turn when held to the lips of the parched and fainting wanderer. You see, in the result of the two lives here portrayed, the effects, on the one hand, of unlawful indulgence in vain amusements; on the other, of the peace and happiness to which virtuous practices and well regulated principles lead.

**DAILY WORRIES: HOW TO MAKE THE BEST OF THEM.**—Now we may lay it down as a general rule with regard to little troubles and annoyances, that we make the *best* of them when we make the *least* of them. Nothing can be more foolish or unprofitable than to be always thinking of and examining into our worries, looking at them through *magnifying glasses*.

## The British Workwoman, OUT AND AT HOME.

SEPTEMBER, 1865.

"I BELIEVE THAT ANY IMPROVEMENT WHICH COULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE MOTHERS, WOULD EFFECT A GREATER AMOUNT OF GOOD THAN ANYTHING THAT HAS YET BEEN DONE."—Earl Shaftesbury.

### THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS.

THERE is a beautiful story in the Book, always a favourite with the mothers and daughters who are conversant with it—a story of wonderful

love between a mother and daughter; all the more wonderful because it was not a tie of blood. Ruth's pathetic address to her mother-in-law, that which on more tenderly impassioned has never been spoken, remains on record, to show what should be the strength of the bond between mother and daughter. A more beautiful illustration it is not possible to find. One scarcely knows which to admire the most,—the generous self-denial of Naomi, who strove to persuade her daughter to leave her, though she was the light of her own desolate home; or the earnest devotion of Ruth, who cried "Entreat me not to leave thee; where thou goest I will go, where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried."

May we say a few words to Mothers and Daughters respecting the imitation of the noble traits in the character of these Bible women? And we would do so with all love and gentleness, knowing the frailties of human nature, and being convinced, by experience, what a hard thing it is to "be and to do the right." We have all our tempers, we have all our natural dispositions, and sometimes in the close companionships of home, our peculiarities rub against those of others; and we do not always take the trouble to resist. We are not always anxious, as we certainly should be, that those who know us best, should form the highest opinions of us.

Is it not so, daughters, at home? Are there never times when you have spent a pleasant evening among friends, and come home over-tired, pouring upon your mother all the irritability and fretfulness which have been controlled before company. Still you know, and will admit to yourselves, that your mother deserves this at your hands less than any one beside. Better be peevish with all your friends than with her who loves you more than you can ever know—who nursed you in her bosom, whose nights were broken by your fitful cries, and who gave them, and all else, willingly up because of her unbounded tenderness for her child.

Do you always realise this? Do you feel your mother to be your very best friend—the one to whom you turn in joy or sorrow for sympathy, and to whom you confide your troubles and pleasures, whose advice and guidance you seek and value more than all others? Oh, daughters of British Workwomen, never be you among the number who seek to hide the knowledge of their pursuits from her who has a God-given right to know everything that concerns them. Never say to your companions, "Don't tell mother,"—it is one of the worst sentences you can utter. Tell her all—be candid, be open, be thoroughly truthful to your mother. Never deceive her, if you would be either safe or happy.

And if we might make another suggestion, it

### The Wife.

**BEHOLD,** how fair of eye, and mild of mien,  
Walks forth of marriage's yonder gentle queen;  
What chaste sobriety her spouse speaks,  
What glad content sits smiling on her cheeks,  
What plans of goodness in that bosom glow,  
What prudent care is thronged upon her brow,  
What pleasure and peace in that her ways!  
What pleasantness and peace in her face!  
Ever blooming on that cheerful face  
Home's heat affects glowing divine in grace;  
Her eyes are ray'd with love, serene and bright;  
Charity wreathes her lips with smile of light;  
Her kindly voice bath music in its notes;  
And Heaven's own atmosphere around her floats!

### Home.

**HOME,** happy word, dear England's ancient boast,  
Thou strongest castle on her sea-girt coast,  
Thou full fair name for comfort, love, and rest,  
Haven of refuge found and peace possesst,  
Oasis in the desert, star of light.  
Spangling the dreary dark of this world's night,  
All-hallow'd spot of angel-trimmed ground  
Where Jesus' love abides, and is lowly round,  
Where the realm amid the earthly world,  
Where Freedom's banner ever flouts unfur'd,  
Fair island of the blest, earth's richest wealth,  
Her plague-struck body's little all of health,—  
Home, gentle name, I two woes to thy song,  
To thee my praise, to thee my prayers belong;  
Inspire me with thy beauty, bid me teen  
With gracious musings worthy of thy theme!  
Spirit of Love, the soul of Home thou art,  
Fan with divinest thoughts my kindling heart;  
Spirit of Power, in pray'r thee all I ask,  
Uphold me, bless me to thy holy task;  
Spirit of Truth, guide thou my wayward wing;  
Love, Power, and Truth, be with me while I sing.

MARTIN F. TUPPER.

**TO YOUNG WOMEN.**—We wish to say a word to you, young women, about your influence over young men. Did you ever think of it? Did you ever realize that you could have any influence at all over the young men of this world?—and, if so, did you consider, Christian example, may exert an awful power. You do not know the respect and almost worship which young men, a man how wicked they may be themselves, pay to a consistent Christian lady, be she young or old. A gentleman once said to a lady who boarded in the same house with him, that her life was a constant proof of the Christian religion. Often the simple request of a lady will keep a young man from doing wrong. We have known this to be the case very frequently, and young men have been kept from swearing just because a lady whom they respected, and whom they had an affection for, rebuked them. A trust given an invitation to a young man to speak, I request that your friend would read the Bible, which will often be regarded, when a more powerful appeal from other sources would fall unheeded upon his heart. Many of the gentlemen whom you meet in society are away from the influence of parents and sisters, and they will respond to any interest taken in their welfare. We all speak of a young man's danger from evil associates, and the very bad influence which his dissipated male associates have over him. We believe it is all true that a man's character is formed, to a great extent, by the women that he associates with before he becomes a complete man of the world.

would be, devote yourselves to your mothers. Surely you are not in the habit of leaving her alone every evening, with the thousand wants of the younger children, while you are away enjoying an evening walk? Does it not, at least, sometimes occur to you that, perhaps, she would like a walk too? Do you ever think how weary she must get of the sight of the four walls bounding in her life?—she may seem contented and cheerful, but, depend upon it, she *needs* a walk every whit as much as her daughter does. Then, now and then, when you have an interesting book, supposing one night a week you were to offer to read it to her, instead of walking out with Charles. We are sure that the readers of the BRITISH WORKWOMAN do not always keep the easy chair when their mother is in the room,—do not mind taking a pair of little socks to mend, to ease those dear, tired eyes,—never forget to jump up and open a door, when, laden with things, the mother passes out.

All these are little things, but little things make up the sum of human life, and a great deal depends upon them.

Then, may we say a word to mothers, also? It is not well to be too harsh upon young follies. You have grey hairs upon your temples, but they are still in the giddy age. Do not expect too much from them; they cannot be old and very sober yet. Take pleasantly any little sacrifices they may make, never allowing them to pass unnoticed, or with only a sullen recognition. Try—and we know how pushed you are for time, and how hard it is to be delicate and tender in such cases—but try and enter into their pursuits,—let them bring their friends home sometimes, and entertain them kindly—do not sneer at their loves and friendships, however foolish you may deem them. A kindly word, a mother's kiss, an affectionate look, may do much good to those whom you love as your own life.

There is generally not too much expression of love between mother and daughter. There is nothing to call forth the out-spokenness of Ruth and Naomi. And so there gets a carelessness of manner, an absence of the loving tones, which should every day be rendered. There are pleasant customs,—such as the observance of birthdays, upon which some little present is made, and some extra kindly words spoken,—and the good night and good morning kiss,—the prayer at the family altar,—during which, sometimes, the mother takes the daughter's hand in her own;—these are all strong concentrating things, binding heart to heart.

For, after all, the best kind of mothers and daughters are those who are sincere Christians.

#### THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

For about three years of His earthly life, our Saviour went about preaching, and doing many wonderful works. But his sermons were very unlike the exhortations to be heard in the Synagogues; in fact, in the common meaning attached to the word preaching, he never preached at all. He talked. He took His text sometimes from a fisherman's oar; sometimes from a flowery hedge side; sometimes from chirping sparrows in the trees; sometimes from a field of corn ripe for the sickle—at all times He addressed Himself to the hearts of those who heard Him, and made religion a thing of every-day life, and not a robe to be worn only on Sabbaths and holidays.

Among the beautiful narratives introduced by our

Saviour into His discourses, there is none more beautiful nor more capable of practical application than that of the good Samaritan.

Jesus had been telling his hearers that they should love and care for others as they loved and cared for themselves; it was the summary of the last six Commandments—our duty towards our neighbour. One of His hearers asked “Who is my neighbour?” and the answer was given in the parable.

A traveller on a lonely road is stopped by high-waymen, robbed, half-murdered, and left alone to perish. The unhappy man, one would say, should have excited the pity and won the help of any passer-by. But two men, at different times,—the one a priest, whose office should have taught him charity; the other a Levite—see him, and reader no help, but leave him to die. Those who thus leave him are virtually his own brethren—and if from those he received no assistance, how can he expect it from strangers? But it is a stranger who helps him. The poor dying Jew is saved by a Samaritan. Yet the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, and counted them as dogs. The Samaritan stops on his journey, hazards the risk of himself being attacked, endures fatigues, spends his money, accepts responsibility for a stranger—a Jew—one of the race by whom he is himself despised.

Who is my neighbour? Why, every living soul on earth—every one—or friend—fictitious or alien—for all it is owing to care, and to render the measure of help which God enables us to render.

The charity which begins at home often ends there. That home has the first claim it is true, but

station. They can afford a smart bonnet, or parasol, they say, and why should they not do as they please with their own money.

But for servants to spend their wages in useless finery, not only prevents them from laying by against the time of sickness and old age, or, it may be, adding to the comforts of an aged parent, but is a positive hindrance to them in their path of life, inasmuch as it proclaims to everyone the vanity and folly of their disposition. Therefore, if, when your mistress gives you your wages, she advises you to lay some of it out in good and useful clothing, and to put the rest in the Post Office Savings' Bank, do not set that down as a grievance. You must think that the money is yours and you have earned it, it is no concern of hers, and one respecting which she must give account to God, in all things to see to the well-being of her servants; and the time may yet come, when from your very heart you will thank her for her watchful care over you.

Again, do not think it a grievance if you are told to do a certain thing at a particular time, when you have set your mind on doing something else. Your mistress may, or may not, have good reasons for what she tells you to do—most likely she has, though she may not give them to you. But, at all events, your duty is the same, and unless you are desired to do what is positively wrong, you have no right to sit in judgment on the wisdom or propriety of her orders. You may think your own way the best, and be tempted still to follow it out, but that is not to be a good servant,—for the first duty of such is to be obedient. It belongs of necessity to the position in which you bave of your own accord placed yourself. You would think it very wrong, and justly so, if your mistress were not to give you your wages punctually, or neglect to provide you with proper food and lodging; but you must remember your claim to this depends on your rightly performing the duties that you have taken on yourself. If you neglect these when your mistress's eye is not on you, if you are deceitful or dishonest, idle or disobedient, you are not fulfilling your part of your engagement with her, and have therefore only yourself to thank if you incur her displeasure.

Do not, then, be so unwise as to magnify every little vexation into a hardship; and, especially, I would exhort you to guard against the approaches to sin. It is scarcely possible to commit a single wrong action. One fault is almost sure to lead to another. Falsehood falls in the track of idleness and disobedience; the indulgence of wrongful curiosity frequently induces covetousness—and this, dishonesty; while a bold and flippant behaviour too often prepares the way to greater sin.

If, for instance, you are a *housemaid*, when you are cleaning the drawing-room, you perhaps see letters left about, and are tempted to indulge your curiosity in reading them—or you think you will just take “one peep” at the books you find on the table—but after this one peep, it is very hard indeed to put the book down, and go on with your dusting. And so your mistress comes down and finds the room not ready; and you possibly are tempted to invent a falsehood to excuse yourself. When you are at your work upstairs, your eye may be caught by the sight of an open drawer, and you think it no great harm to explore its contents. This may make you wish for what is not yours; a little bit off that ribbon you think will never be missed, and it would just match a piece you have got.

At present, you would, I dare say, shrink from taking any loose silver that may chance to be lying about, but if you once allow yourself to take *anything* that does not belong to you—even this may soon become easy, and where will you then stop?—for the downward path is such an easy one to tread!

Perhaps, however, you are a *cook* or *housekeeper*. If that case your position is one of great trust. You have not only to guard against waste and extravagance yourself, but to endeavour to prevent it in others; and if you are found unfaithful, you have much to answer for. You may be tempted to



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

then outside our homes we have claims upon us not to be neglected or forgotten. We must lend the helping hand, whenever we can; and be sure of this, that those who help others shall themselves be helped.

Our engraving represents the Samaritan taking leave of the wounded man, and furnishing the tavern-keeper with the necessary funds for the invalid's stay in his house.

J. T.

#### THE HARDSHIPS OF SERVICE, AND HOW TO MEET THEM.

##### PAET IV.

BESIDES the real trials of service, there are those that servants, wrongfully, imagine to be such.

Some girls are silly enough to think it a great hardship if they are made to do their work properly. They don't see the use of people being so “faddy,” and can't bear being looked after, as if they knew no better than a child; and so they will throw away their opportunities of improvement, and give up a good situation for the very reason that ought to make them glad to keep it. Others think it a great unkindness that they are not allowed to go to pleasure-fairs, dances, shows, or Sunday parties; whereas, if their mistress were to permit it, it would only show that she had very little care for their best interests.

Again, others consider it a great hardship if they are required to dress in a manner becoming to their

entertain your friends and relations (or those of your fellow-servants), at your master's expense; to give away provisions, &c., in exchange for services done to yourself. You may think it hard not to share the delicacies that you have to prepare for others, and be induced to secretly a portion for your own use. If it be your business to buy butter, cheese, groceries, &c., or settle bills, there are again many temptations to dishonesty. If not the actual taking of money that does not belong to you, you may suffer yourself to be induced by dishonestable tradespeople to deal with them to your master's disadvantage, on the promise of a consideration for yourself. In fact, there are endless ways in which a cook is tempted to be deceitful or dishonest, and perhaps she may never be found out by man. Yet there is an Eye ever watching her, spying out all her ways, and how can she escape the scrutiny of him to whom the darkness and the light are both alike?

It may be, however, that you are not cook or housemaid, but *maids*, and so all this has nothing to do with you. Yet do not put the paper down quite yet, for we want to say a few words to you as well. Difficulties and trials are, perhaps, your daily experience, and we should like, if we can, to help you to see your way through them.

The children that you have the care of have probably been so indulged and allowed to have their own way, that you find yourself quite unable to make them mind you. If you tell them not to do a thing, they only seem more determined to do it; if you are vexed or angry, they laugh; if you punish them, they displease your mistress. You are thus tempted to indulge them in hurtful or forbidden things; and to screen yourself from blame, perhaps, tell them to "be sure and say nothing about it." This habit of concealment is a fault that nurses are very apt to fall into. Yet it is what they ought most especially to guard against, for the consequences of it are most injurious to the children that are under their care. Many a once healthy child has been crippled for life, doomed to drag on a helpless and miserable existence, from a hurt or fall which his nurse had first carelessly caused and then blamlessly concealed. Many a one, with a mind framed for high and noble things, has been robbed of his birthright, and through life become the prey of imaginary fears, from the false terrors with which his nurse used to frighten him into goodness. But worse, far worse, than the ruin of body or mind, is the ruin of the heart. And, alas! how often have the first lessons of deceit and hypocrisy been learnt in the nursery. False excuses and specious lies have been put into the child's mouth by his nurse, in order to hide his and her faults; and is it any wonder, if his master has become like his boyhood—a hollow pretence.

It is a glibious mistake to spoil children; it is cruel to be harsh and unkind to them; but the greatest harm of all that you can do is to be untruthful. I know that it is not easy always to be open and straightforward with children; they are given to ask tiresome questions, and the readiest way to satisfy them is to give them an untrue or evasive answer. But it is a very wrong way. Children should not be accustomed to expect all their questions to be answered. It is often better to refuse kindly but firmly, to tell them what they ask.

Then, again, it seems such an easy way of getting children to be good, to promise or threaten them; and you may be apt to do this, without considering whether you really mean, or will be able, to keep your word; but, remember, the surest way to make children obey and respect you, is always to do what you say you will.

By firmness and kindness, the most stubborn disposition may almost always be overcome in the end. It may at first be very uphill work; you may have many difficulties to contend with; but do not try to escape these by wrong methods. If you have a headache, and bury it more than usually noisy, do not give her a dose of "children's quietus," for by this means you may do her an immense mischief. Rather endeavour, by gentle love and patient self-forgetfulness, to gain the hearts of the little ones, and then they will of themselves try not to be a worry to you.

The practical lesson, then, that we have to learn from all this—is to beware of the *beginnings* of evil. Not so much to fear hardships as to fear sin; not so much to try and escape from hardship, as to bear it bravely, and this not resting on our own strength, but in reliance on Him who has said, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbrieth not."

"Waste not—want not."

## WOMEN'S WORK IN STAFFORDSHIRE.

**STAFFORDSHIRE** is part of the back-bone of England—near the centre of the land. Its industries chiefly require gin and stern labour, along with experience and skill. Females might be, therefore, naturally, expected to occupy a higher place in Staffordshire than in the counties celebrated for the clothing trades. Its population contains more men than women, and the wages of the former are comparatively high, bearing some proportion to the peculiar nature of the work. Still the condition of many female operatives in this great county is deplorable, and from the nature of their employment cannot be easily improved. Female labour in collieries is illegal, yet females are employed on the pit-banks in all the mining districts, including Staffordshire. The labour is rough and severe: the company is often objectionable, and the results pernicious. It is unusually work. Even the costume of Lancashire females engaged on the pit-banks is unfeminine. Their morals frequently become debased, and those females in this occupation who desire to live creditably and uprightly, are exposed to more than the corrupting influences of example and language; to more than evil persuasion—as recent cases in some of the mining districts have shown.

Nearly one thousand females are employed on the pit-banks of Staffs-d-hire; but a far greater number are engaged on equally disagreeable, rough and unseemly work. Staffs-d-hire is divided into North and South, and both divisions are engaged in mining; in iron blasting and casting; puddling and rolling, and in the various manufactures connected with the iron, and part of those forming the hardware trade. Both North and South have manufacturers of glass and earthenware, and the "Potters" send specimens of skill and taste to the dinner and tea tables of high and low over half the world. The pottery business is now brought under the Factory Act, and many injurious practices have been discontinued or modified; and some security is afforded for education and for moderate hours of labour: but several processes are deemed unhealthy, although the general appearance of the female operatives in the Pottery towns does not justify the statement occasionally made on that subject. A short residence in them would, also, certainly not confirm to a casual observer the reported immorality said, in recent publications, to be prevalent there. On the contrary, the population seem to be more intelligent and respectable than those of many country towns unconnected with manufactures and trade. These Pottery towns have a superabundance of beer and gin shops, and some of the latter have music rooms attached, with nominal "Professors" from Italy, and vocalists who, according to the placards, must be "missed" in London, yet Burslem, Hanley, and Tunstall are orderly and quiet places, which leave a favourable impression on the mind of a visitor.

Dudley is not so much a manufacturing town, as the heart of a group; and yet its narrow lanes are partly occupied by small, bodily built shops, with three or four forges in each, and females at work in them. The female operatives are generally engaged in chain or nail-making, but some of them are occupied in locks or other articles of hardware. These avocations are not more inconsistent with the knowledge and practice of good house-keeping, than many other less violent exercises in which females are compelled to labour and live. One young girl may carry from the store to the shop a half cwt. bundle of iron rods, on her shoulder or head—in the latter case with a straw bonnet dangling in her hand—as another carries a band-box, or parcel of materials in millinery, with the utmost propriety; but at first the bundle of rods seems more remarkable, in addition to the difference of weight. Perhaps the physical exercise of hammering red hot iron, on a small anvil, for an indefinite number of hours daily, may be less disadvantageous—although it appears less natural than the common and confined labour of the seamstress. Chain and nail-making are carried on to a large extent in Cradley and the Ley. A great majority of the chain-makers and nailers in these places have small shops, with three or four forges, attached to their dwelling-houses, and female nailers are often engaged along with their relatives. It is difficult to form any accurate estimate of their numbers, as they are scattered over the country, among its towns and villages.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Cradley and Ley, and including these places, from three to four thousand females live by making nails, and seven thousand in "the black country," probably follow that trade. An active man will not clear more than

fifteen shillings weekly at this business, while boys and females earn less money; yet we regret that a proposal to reduce these earnings has led to all the distress among the operatives, arising from a comparatively idle summer. As this business is generally carried on at home, it does not interfere with the acquisition of some knowledge in household occupations; but it has no fixed hours, and in the absence of regularity in this respect half-holidays are avenged by other days of labour, stretched out to the last limits of strength and time.

The dwelling-houses in the iron district are almost exclusively built of brick, as are the blast furnaces, that resemble small pyramids, scattered over the country, throwing out fire and smoke, like perpetual volcanoes; and the puddling furnaces grouped together in detachments of thirty to forty; and the huge chimneys that once usually stand like sentinels, and in other quarters dot the land in groups of two or three; while the long lines of road, that link town to town, have pavements of brick; and this the production of common decorative, and of fire bricks, forms a large part of the local Staffordshire trade. These clay-works also turn out pipes and tiles, for agricultural and other purposes, of a mileage that might, in a short time, stretch round the world. They require many operatives who have not the advantage of any factory law. Many of them are females, and hundreds of little girls—who should be running to or from school, or playing on the green sward,—tramp in summer or winter, cold or hot, dry or wet, over twenty, in some cases thirty miles of the heavy soil, carrying burdens of half-formed materials. As they grow up, they are advanced to other processes of the trade. The labour is so uninteresting that an on-looker could not easily distinguish, by their dress, between the men and women engaged in this work. According to the Government Inspector, who has examined the circumstances connected with these manufacturers of clay goods, the morality of the female operatives is questionable. He adduces many flagrant examples of extreme ignorance and vice; and his opinions are confirmed from other sources. The character of the employment, and the up-bringing of the people, supply great facilities for vice, and equally great obstructions to virtue. We do not allege, and fact by no means prove, that this class are all more tainted than other classes; but the circumstances of the employment are destructive of a modest deportment, and likely to produce many scandals. These objectionable circumstances are not, like the severe toll, inseparable from the business; for while the latter can only be, but should be, modified, the former may be removed, or toned down to the common condition of outdoor work. The reformation or removal of grievances is often left to strangers; yet Staffs-d-hire has multitudes of earnest Christian workers. In connection with one numerous body of Christians, some "female preachers" of mature age and information, address congregations, and conduct public services. We were present at one of these services, and heard nothing that was not commendable and useful; but on returning through some steep lanes in Dudley, we found female operatives on the Sabbath afternoon, indulging conduct and language bestial, and most reprehensible; and marvelled whether it might not be that some good, middle-aged ladies had forsaken their vocation. "The missing link" has not yet been found in some of these counties. Birmingham is deemed by its philanthropists the head-quarters of the Freedmen and Freedwomen's Aid Society. It is a noble distinction to be the centre of a noble work. Only we would remind Birmingham, that the clay-fields within from two to twenty miles of its Exchange, present female labour, and the labour of girls, quite as severe as cotton planting can be in the tropics; in circumstances, almost equal with slavery, ministered to the interests of morality, and with results not less deplorable and vicious. Until the present time, the associated miners, through their delegates, and by their friends in Parliament, are alone endeavouring to remove female labourers from the banks of coal pits; but there are many ladies in these counties, enriched by the wealth stubbornly wrung from beneath the soil, willing to assist good objects, who have a grand cause, and the materials of a great reformation around them. They could remove a reproach from the doors of their own homes and mansions, or they could employ the means for its removal. Fifty intelligent Bible women might work their way to the hearts of many among these five thousand female-workers in clay, and change the costume, habits, and even the practice of this labour, and these labourers. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase;—yet Paul was instructed to plant, and Apollos to water.

## THE MOTHER'S VISION.

"Hush! I do not weep; it is over, now.—Patience!" they calmly said.  
Vexing with words my wearied ear, and my child is in my arms dead;  
I stooped, with passionate grief, to kiss the little pallid face,  
That, like to a wakened image, lay in my clasping arms' embrace.

I passed my fingers once again through the soft, bright, curling hair,  
And drew the head to my desolate heart, that should never again rest there;  
I kissed the dimpled hands and feet, and the broad, white, blue-veined breast,  
And my heart could not feel, nor my lips confess that "God took him for the best."

I wanted my baby all night long, to rest near my aching heart;  
I wanted to watch his cradled sleep, with his rosy lips apart;  
I wanted my baby's little hands, to play with my loosened hair;  
I wanted my baby's babbling tones, to win me from every care.

I wanted my boy, I wanted him to grow up amid other men;  
That, as my own life waned away, I might live in his life again;  
And my heart was sore, O my heart was sore, when they laid him beneath the sod;  
I could not to Heaven its angel give, I grudged him to his God.

I could not weep, but my wild complaint rang ceaseless night and day;  
"Why were all other infants left, and my infant snatched away?"  
Till at length, in the depths of the silent night, a form before me stood,  
Whose presence filled my heart with joy, though a strange awe chilled my blood.

'Twas the little child,—"twas the little child they had taken from me away—  
From the warm clasp of my loving arms, to place him in damp cold clay;  
In snow robes, with two soft white wings, the flowers of the Better Land,  
His brawny countenance; while a small gold harp he held in his little hand.

But the cherub face in his infant life, which was ever so bright and glad,  
Seemed downcast now, and his large blue eyes filled with tear-drops sad;  
I was silent first, but strong mother's love soon o'er-came my human fears,  
And I asked my boy why angel-eyes were thus filled with mortal tears.

"Mother," he said, "from where I was laid to rest,  
'neath the fresh green soil,  
Has gone up your wild despairing cry—I grudge him to his God!"  
It darkens my spirit, even there 'mid the happy angel-hand,

And the harp, which God's purest praise should hymn,  
Langs silent in my hand.

"But He is Love,—and a pitying glance has cast on thy sinful woe,

And to win back thy soul to peace, has sent me to tell thee what now I know.

Mother, had I to manhood grown, my nature fierce and wild,  
Would have steeped my soul in darkest sin, and God took your little child.

"In tenderest mercy parting us, for a few brief passing years,

That we may meet again, to know no partings, griefs, or tears;

Then humbly how the will to His, whose mercy hemms us round,

That the cloud from my spirit may pass away, and my harp with His praise resound!"

As he spoke, my heart was softening fast; as he ceased, my infant smiled,

With a ray so bright of Heaven's own light, that I scarcely knew my child:

His white wings moved, and beneath his touch the harp gave forth a sound,

Which steeped my soul in bliss, so deep, I knew not what passed around.

When it died away, the child was gone, my little angel-son;

But I knew by the tears, now shed at last, that God's victory was won.

With morning light, by the grave I knelt—the dew yet genned the sod—

And with an humble, contrite heart, gave him and myself to God.

ELIZABETH TOWNBRIDGE.

## "WHO CARES?"

"Who cares?" said Martha Hutchings, setting down one dirty dish and taking up another; "nobody ever cared for me; I was bundled off to service before I was ten years old, because mother was dead, and aunt wanted me out of the way; and since then, I've been knocked about from pillar to post,—out of one place into another,—might have gone mad or wicked, nobody minded; that's what I say, who cares?"

"God cares," said the grave, weak voice of little Tom, the errand boy—a frail, sickly little fellow, who, somehow, contrived to make will and skill supply the place of strength, and so succeed in the object of his ambition, and "keep his place."

"God!" said Martha; "how do you mean?"

"Why, He must care, you know; don't you about things that you've made yourself?"

"Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't; depends upon what it is."

"But if you could make something alive, you would get fond of that, wouldn't you?"

"I suppose so; but, lor, Tom, what rubbish you can talk, to be sure, when once you give your mind to it."

"Was that rubbish?" said Tom, not at all resenting the assertion; but rather accustomed to finding himself out of his own depth, as well as other people's.

"Rubbish!—I should think so; but have you cleaned master's boots?"

"Oh, no! I forgot, I'll do them now; master would care about me if I didn't, wouldn't he?" said Tom, running off with a roguish smile.

"Care, yes," said Martha to herself, "like they would about the clock it stopped, just about as much feeling for one as the other."

Clearly Martha was in a dismal mood; there could be no doubt about that—she was tired, and it was very hot, and Martha's kitchen was not exactly the place one would have chosen to cool oneself in; as uncomfortable, sore feeling over her eyes, made her glad to sit down and rest them, with a five minutes' nap; but her head, resting against the wall, rubbed off the colouring into her hair, and she got up again, saying, "However then, footman can stand being powdered, I can't think; butler her, my head feels like a Sand-Martin."

Martha had no very definite notion as to whether a Sand-Martin was fish, flesh, or fowl; but she had picked up the word with a Londoner's relish for anything rural, and supposed it must mean something sandy; perhaps it was as well, that, just at that moment, she was not tantalised by the thought of the free breezy life of the dainty little bird she had named.

"Oh, dear! I wish I was dead," she said, presently; but a sudden, sharp pain through her temples seemed to suggest the near possibility of death; and, with a shiver, she turned her wishes into, "I wish I was a better girl; I wish I had learned in my Bible or something; I wish—oh! I wish there was an body in all the wide world to care whether I lived or died." Then she stopped suddenly, for her throat seemed to dry up; and with a terrified sense of falling down unknown depths, she sank upon the floor—poor Martha had a fever.

Martha's mistress was one of those people, colder in manner than in heart, who seldom get justice done to them; she had to keep in order a large family, and larger school, and, at first from sheer fatigued, had fallen into the habit of not speaking beyond what was absolutely necessary; but she was far from unkind, and though, to secure the safety of the rest of the household, Martha was removed at once to the hospital, Tom's mother was sent for, to go with her, and see that all was comfortable.

Tom's mother had for years been indebted to his mistress for constant little kindnesses, and therefore was not so much astonished as Martha would have been to receive a little purse of money with the injunction, "Let me know when it is spent, and see that she lacks nothing—poor girl."

Many days and nights Martha lay insensib;le; when at length she awoke, she found herself peacefully laid in a white, soft bed, with an unaccountable fragrance of strawberries pervading the cool, quiet air.

"I suppose it's heaven," she thought, "or else a dream; anyhow, I'll keep still, let nuns' bell should ring;" but some one said, "Won't you wake up, dear?" in a gentle, motherly voice—such a voice as had never addressed Martha since she could remember.

"Ah!" she said, contritely, "that's just the way I should have thought they talked in heaven; it's very nice; I wonder I was afraid to die."

She had spoken aloud, and the motherly voice—this time with a shade of trouble in it—said, "Poor girl, she's a little high-headed still, but she'll soon come round; see," she continued to Martha, "only just look what your friends brought you."

"It isn't me," said Martha; "I haven't got any friends."

"Well, that's pretty," said another voice; so cheery and so thin—it reminded her of Tom's, grown older, "You got any friends in leed?" the voice went on, "when they have sent you this?" "This," being put close to her, was so exceedingly fragrant, that Martha opened her eyes, and found out where the strawberry odour had come from. It was a round, deep basket of British Queen's, which a slight, pale woman, in a white cap, was holding towards her.

"Don't you know what to do with them, dearie?" said the motherly body, whose clean, precision of dress somehow told Martha that she was an hospital nurse. "Oh, yes," said Martha, with a sigh of delight, as the first one munched in her mouth; "but I never saw such monsters."

"Yes," said the widow, looking pleased, "they wanted them to be first-rate, and there's been plenty of time to get them; to-day is the first day the doctors said you might have some."

"But such beauties," said Martha, again; "they must be rich people that sent them."

"Rich enow," said the widow, with a curious smile; and Martha feasted in silence, only now and then begging her companion to "take one to make it seem real." When she had finished, the widow said, "You don't know me, do you? I'm Tom's mother—you remember little Tom?"

"Oh, yes," said Martha, with a glance of compunction at the empty basket; "I wish I had saved him a strawberry."

"He's had his share, I fancy," said the widow, smiling.

"How? said Martha. "In giving them to you—he bought them, his brother and him, on purpose for you; they've been saving up for it ever since you've been ill."

"But how ever did they get the money?" said Martha.

"Oh! went messages and hell-horses, and so on, in their mean times," said the widow.

"How good of them!—Oh, how good of them!"

Martha was crying a little, though weaknesses and pleasure.

"Yes, they are good children, Tom especially—it was his thought." The widow's eyes were dewy with a mother's pride and joy. "The good nurse obj'ects to tears, on principle; but, as she said afterwards, she had not the heart to interfere;—when Martha, half raising herself, drew the widow towards her and said, "Will you really be my friend? I've never had an all in my life, nobody cared for me since mother died."

"Somebody cares now, then," said the widow, her voice still as clear and cheery as a little bird's; "she may be dear to me instead of my daughter that died, if you like—she would have been just about your age. It used to remind me of her when Tom was talking about you."

"God in heaven, bless you," said Martha, whose tears of joy would not let her say more; but when the widow had gone, and the kind, skillful nurse was arranging her for sleep, Martha said, "God forgive me for despising—I'll never say again, 'Who cares?'"

SADIE.

LOANS.—Strictly speaking, are not all our earthly goods loans? We are accustomed to speak of them, as if their title was inherent in ourselves, yet their unannounced departure often corrects this error, and discloses the tenure by which they are held. Wealth, though one of the most coveted, is also amongst the most transitory of loans. It is unnecessary to revert to storied annals, or foreign lands, for a commentary on the inspired assertion that it takes to itself wings, and flies away. It is subject to the sway of all the elements. First, it devours it, water submerges it, fire devours it, wind scatters it. Its tendency to transition, to disappearance, without leaving a trace behind, is obvious to all, while the conscientious mind perceives yet another evil, the danger of abuse. "What way can Christians take," says the pious John Wesley, "that their money sink them not into perdition? There is but one way, and no other, under heaven. And this is it: let those who gain all they can, and save all they can, likewise give all they can. Then the more will they grow in grace, and the more treasure will they lay up in heaven." Wealth, unaliated to benevolence and a sense of responsibility, is perilous to our eternal interests. Faithfully used, as a means of influence, of imparting happiness, relieving suffering, enlightening ignorance, it is one of the richest blessings.—Mrs. L. H. Sigourney.

## "YES, DEAR! PAPA IS COMING."

There is a pretty picture, copies of which may be seen in many thousands of English homes at eventide:—A door suddenly opens, and light and joy come in, for the father has returned from the occupations of the day, and the mother's face kindles with gladness of greeting, while the little ones run towards him with outstretched arms, and eager lips done up ready for a kiss. Happy the man whom such a welcome awaits,—

"A child's kiss,

Set on his sighing lips shall make him glad."

No frightened look proclaims his coming;—his children do not run away from his sight for fear of harsh words and harsher blows. On the contrary, the sound of his footstep is the signal for a general noisy scamper, and a thorough shout of joy from the little ones waiting to be tossed. Happy the wife of such a husband,—her song should be the sweetest of all that are sung on earth.

Such a picture of ease at home is our cogitating this month. We need not tell our readers what family is more representative; for the faces of the Prince and Princess of Wales—the happy pair, whom the nation delights to honour—are now sufficiently familiar to the people of England, through the photographs which are in every window, and the opportunities which many have had of seeing the illustrious individuals themselves.

We are evidently a home-loving people. We delight in making our dwelling-places pleasant and happy. It is (or should be) the aim of everyone of us to bar our doors to the approaches of strife and contention, and open them wide to peace and love, and good-will.

And so it delights us to know that the highest performances in our land, live in happy homes—homes made musical by the voices of childhood,—homes in which a parent's joy is felt, to which the home-coming is always a glad one.

And as it is in the palace, so is it in the cottage. The labourer at work in the harvest-field is glad when the sunset tinges the western clouds, because he thinks of the wife who is looking out of the window and watching for him; of the little ones who will not go to bed until they have given father a good-night kiss. The mechanic, working and the heat and dust, is glad to hear the bell which summons him home. The merchant, spending the day at his business with aching brain and puzzled brow, is as delighted as any of them, for he thinks not only of his grand drawing-room, or his costly pictures, but of the dear little one who, with bright blue eyes and flaxen curls, will spring into his arms and lay her soft cheek against his.

God be thanked for the happy homes of England. It is too true, that many of them are darkened by sin and sorrow, and poverty; but where love is, there is a strong redeeming power,—and joy, and gladness, and hope are where the children run to the door with glee at the father's return.

LAUNDRIES FOR THE WOMEN, AND MORE GOOD DWELLINGS FOR THE POOR.—Do our readers know Golden-lane, in the parish of St. Luke's? Have they glanced with a wholesome dread up that narrow thoroughfare which joins the Barbican at the junction of Beech and Red Cross-streets? Golden-lane is not a lovely lane. It is long and narrow and crooked, dirty and squalid and smoky. . . . It is in the heart of this unlovely locality that a German gentleman proposed to erect a stack of buildings which should contain improved dwellings, baths, and laundries for the wretched poor who live in the surrounding lanes; and now that the project has been accomplished, now that a handsome and spacious building has risen in the centre of this peopled wilderness, a Company has been formed to continue the practical working of the system. Whether the erection of this building is purely a philanthropic experiment, or a business speculation, matters not one straw. The pleasant, wholesome, airy little rooms are there; they may be had for 5s. or 6s. or 7s. a week; they offer a happy relief from the most painful squalor, and they offer besides the advantages of cleanliness in the matter of clothing; and for such things one ought to be grateful. The view from the roof of this building is one of the saddest that ever met mortal view. The wretched garrets saturated in dirt seem huddled together beneath the slumbering clouds of blue smoke; yet it was while looking out on this prospect that one gentleman observed, "England is prosperous by the great goodness of God;" and his companion replied, "We see it everywhere around us." If God gives England prosperity, England

takes care that the prosperity shall be filtered through an exceedingly small number of channels. What signifies a good harvest if people are starving? What signifies the blessing that God gives the country, if those with longest arms put their hands above the heads of their brothers, and grasp the blessing ere it reaches the earth? . . . The crowds of pitiable, sunken-cheeked children, bare-footed and bare-headed, who crowded round the building yesterday, were the best arguments possible in favour of its erection. The dim-eyed, tawdry-dressed women who stood gossiping there may have wondered what all the stir and bustle meant; let us hope that the momentary curiosity was not without result, and that these cleanly little rooms may soon be fully occupied. Already the greater portion of those which are finished have been let; and we can testify to the comfortable and pleasant appearance of these humble dwellings. They seem to have been constructed with care; they have all requisite household conveniences; while, besides the baths and laundries which are in such opportune contiguity, the roof of the building has been surrounded by an iron railing to form a drying ground for clothes. There is likewise a spacious lecture-hall, and many other of the like requisites which give the great building the character of an isolated colony in that unhappy neighbourhood. . . . Augustus Julius Vievey has set an excellent example, which we hope to see followed in many other of the more densely populated districts of the metropolis.—*Morning Star*.

## SONGS OF THE WORKERS.—No. II.

## A HARVEST HYMN.

TUNE.—"See the Conquering Hero comes."

Welcome to the harvest time!  
Now the earth is in her prime,  
Covered over with sleeves of wealth,  
She is bare, but she is fair;  
And the earth is in her prime—  
Welcome to the harvest time!  
Life the heart and raise the brow,  
Boldly face the winter now;  
Want, with haggard look and mice,  
Shall not stand your joy between:  
For the earth is in her prime—  
Welcome to the harvest time!  
Sing a song of praise to heaven—  
Spring and summer have been given;  
Genial sun and gentle rain,  
Fall upon the precious grain:  
And the earth is in her prime—  
Welcome to the harvest time!  
God has heard the prayer for bread,  
With his children daily said;  
He will dry the widow's tears,  
He will feed us through the years:  
For the earth is in her prime—  
Welcome to the harvest time!  
Welcome, welcome, precious sheaves;  
Welcome, welcome, Autumn leaves;  
Welcome e'en the winter's wild swell—  
God is with us—all is well;  
And the earth is in her prime—  
Welcome to the harvest time!

M. F.

MORE GOOD NEWS.—The Wives and Mothers of our Working Men residing in the neighbourhood of Islington, will be glad to learn that another portion of the Peabody gift has been applied to the purchase of the site of a pile of buildings in Essex-road, Islington, once densely occupied by a community for the most part consisting of some of the worst characters in the metropolis. The new building is substantially constructed of brick, and consists of four blocks of houses, five stories in height, which will be let out in pairs, at the rate of one, two, and three pairs, at an estimated rental of 2s., 3s., and 4s. per week respectively. Each block will afford accommodation for sixty families, or 240 in the aggregate. The rooms are each of them to be 9 feet wide, and 12 feet long, and of a suitable height. The attic of each block is paved with tiles from the Isle of Wight, and is surmounted by a handsome ornamental turret. There is also accommodation for washing, drying, &c., and at each end of the buildings is a cistern, 12 feet long, 6 feet wide, and 4 feet deep, capable of containing 1,760 gallons of water. Everything has been done to render the sanitary arrangements complete in every respect. It is contemplated to erect workshops for the accommodation of tailors, tailoresses, and others. These, however, although of course under the control of the trustees, will be irrespective of Mr. Peabody's gift, and will be let at a very moderate rental. Numerous applications have already been made for tenements by men whose wages average from 18s. to 20s. per week—the class for whom they were intended by the benevolent donor; but none will be taken whose character will not bear the strictest investigation.—*Church Standard*.

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"A periodical specially adapted to the feelings, the duties, and the getting-up of the work shows a spirit of enterprise which will not fail to impress the reader. This is well suited to a domestic table, but an elevated, central position, round which both the author and the reader may sit, is still better. Many of the incidents recorded are of an interesting character, and show that much good may be done by a word fitly spoken either by a child or an adult. We have seen the book, and are satisfied that the happy influence of woman is so strongly and amply set forth in all the varied spheres of life and duty. It is emphatically a woman's book, and we heartily commend it to his wife, and every brother girl, and to his sister."—*Wycliffe Magazine*.

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"The periodical is well, and ought to be placed by the side of its companion, the 'British Workwoman' and other good books, in every cottage. It is sound advice and instruction to our young people. If we could only have more happy homes."—*Wycliffe Magazine*.

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